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Czechoslovakia: The Defense Ministry has broadcast unusual details about preparations for a Warsaw Pact exercise next week, probably to allay fears of Soviet intervention.

The ministry said that preparations are under way for the previously announced "command-staff" Warsaw Pact exercise and that Soviet communications troops are moving into Czechoslovakia. The statement, broadcast by Radio Prague's domestic and foreign services, emphasized the staff aspects of the exercise and played down the role of regular troops. The troops used, the statement added, will be mainly from the Czechoslovak Army and will serve as representative "marker units."

Some of the more outspoken newspapers in Czechoslovakia have reflected a general apprehension in recent weeks over Western press reports that the Soviet Army would intervene in Czechoslovakia, if requested. On 31 May, the Socialist Party organ complained that the Defense Ministry had not provided sufficient detail concerning the coming exercise.

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Only limited information is available so far on the Czechoslovak central committee plenum, which moved into its third day yesterday. Some central committee members, including heretofore conservative-leaning presidium member Emil Rigo, called upon those who supported Novotny and those who have "discredited" themselves to resign before the extraordinary congress convenes in September.



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4

SECRET